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PROGRAM Panorama

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SUBJECT CIA Involvement in Nicaragua

MAURY POVICH: Welcome, please, Ray Cline, formerly the Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency for Intelligence. He is now with the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University. And Harry Rositzke, station chief in many countries, as well as the head of the division regarding the Soviet Union, served with the CIA for more than 25 years now, and has this new book out called Managing Moscow: Guns or Goods.

Let's start with you, Harry, and the premise. You say your brethren, people you worked with for 25 years, maybe because of the Bay of Pigs experience and others, the CIA should not be running the war on an operational basis.

HARRY ROSITZKE: Well, the only reason for getting CIA in is to have a kind of a cover so that at any time it comes up, the President can say, in effect, this is not an official American operation. In other words, this so-called plausible denial means he can say no without really lying.

POVICH: We are not legitimately in there unless we send in the United States Army.

ROSITZKE: That's right.

So, that has broken down three times. When the U-2 went over, President Eisenhower said, "I did it." When the Bay of Pigs messed up, the President, in effect, said, "I'm responsible." Then it got down to be kind of silly, whereas the Angolan support was debated in Congress. And now we suddenly have the support for the Contras being a matter of discussion in the press, in pulpits, in Congress, and among anybody who's

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